(b) The World Bank expert on agriculture, Mr. V. Rajagopalan has identified improving overall quality of research, a focus on plant breeding other than the major food grains, imbalances in geographic allocation of research funds failure to set up priorities and poor research system organisation and management as some of the main issues of agricultural system in India.

(c) The remedial measures taken in this connection include the following;

(i) Strengthening of Institutes conducting research in all crops.

(ii) Providing support to State Agricultural Universities (SAU) for improvingg regional research capabilities under National Agricultural Research Project (NARP).

(iii) Promoting farming systems approach.

(iv) Making appropriate structural and functional changes in the research organisations on the advice of expert agencies.

(v) Granting of funds for time-bound ad-hoc research in critical areas.

(vi) Setting up of a Standing Policy Planning Committee for the Indian Council of Agril. Research.

Fellowship scheme in ICAR

525. SHRI KRISHAN KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a press newsitem captioned "Resource Crunch hits ICAR fellowships" as reported in the Indian Express dated 29th January 1993;

(b) whether due to financial crunch the ICAR has decided to wind up the fellowship scheme;

(c) since when the fellowship scheme was in existence in the ICAR; and

(d) what are the reasons that ICAR has decided to discontinue this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The scheme has been in existence since the Second Five Year Plan.

(d) Final decision to discontinue the scheme has not been taken.

Diversion of Land from Food Crops

526. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that farmers are switching over to more lucrative crops like oilseeds and sugarcane resulting in lower productivity of foodgrains;

(b) if so, whether Government would attribute this to the recent price hike on fertilizers like MOP and DAP; and

(c) what are the steps proposed to be taken to wean back the farmers to foodgrain cultivation?